

ABSTRACT

Most IT products are undifferentiated in their functional characteristics, making it much more difficult for buyers to differentiate one brand from another and correspondingly, difficult for marketers to establish brand preference. This lack of differentiation among IT related brands is particularly true for component or ingredient brands in the IT industry, such as microprocessors. Without a microprocessor, a computer brand such as IBM, Compaq, and Toshiba, is not equipped to perform the functions they claim to offer. Hence, co-branding between computer manufacturer and microprocessor manufacturer has been implemented as one means to induce computer brand choice. The purpose of this research was to examine the relationships between marketing mix elements, brand equity, and customer loyalty for the Intel microprocessor brand among Bangkok consumers.

This quantitative study involved data collection by self-administered questionnaires of a convenience sample of 384 Intel customers in Bangkok during May and June 2006. The data collection sites included Intel booths located within four major IT malls in Bangkok including Pantip Plaza, IT Mall Fortune, Seri Center, and Zeer Rangsit.

The results of the analysis showed that the marketing mix elements of product, price, place, and promotion had positive relationships with the brand equity elements of perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness and brand association and also with customer loyalty. Additionally, the strongest relationships were found between (1) brand equity and loyalty, (2) product and customer loyalty, and (3) place and brand loyalty while all other bivariate correlations were at a moderate level.

The implications from these findings suggest that investments in the marketing mix elements of an ingredient brand are important in building not only brand equity, but also customer loyalty. Therefore, ingredient branding may be a worthwhile undertaking for industrial manufacturers and the marketing mix for such brands should be given greater consideration.